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STAFF NOTES: SOVIET UNION EASTERN EUROPE

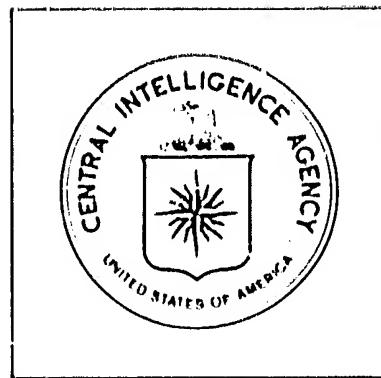
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01 OF 01

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Confidential

25X1



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Confidential

88

July 17, 1975
No. 0745/75

25X1

Approved For Release 2002/09/05 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000400060003-0

Approved For Release 2002/09/05 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000400060003-0

CONFIDENTIAL.

SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE



25X1

The Soviet Leadership's Election Campaign Speeches

Between May 27 and June 13, all the Soviet leaders made major speeches in the districts where they were seeking election to the republic Supreme Soviets. Election campaigns such as this one are carefully structured, and the speeches generally follow approved formulations. Nevertheless, there are some opportunities for individuals to show--by emphasis and omission--how they are inclined on the issues. Today's Staff Notes is devoted to an analysis of this year's campaign and speeches. Prepared by the Soviet Internal Branch (7453).

Perhaps the outstanding feature of the election campaign this summer was its routine nature. The speeches lacked distinctive qualities, and the only firm line to emerge from them was support for detente. Even on this subject, the discussion in general was not distinguished by visionary optimism about future benefits, but by a general mood of satisfaction with the USSR's current international position and by a solid recognition that the policy is established and not open to question.

General Secretary Brezhnev came off as a secure leader but not, at the moment, an assertive one. On domestic affairs, he had practically nothing of significance to say. His retreat to the neutrality of silence was particularly notable on the subjects of the long-term plan and the

July 17, 1975

-1-

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

consumer program, on both of which he has waxed eloquent in the past. Moreover, he chose to identify himself with the views of all his colleagues, saying: "These speeches reflect our Central Committee's general policy, both in domestic and foreign affairs, the policy of the Politburo of our party Central Committee."

The other speakers were low-keyed, for the most part avoiding controversial issues. Their speeches did not portray a sharply divided or disputatious leadership. This restraint by Brezhnev's colleagues is in keeping with their behavior earlier this year during the party chief's absences from public life. Their collective discipline is a plus for Brezhnev's own position.

With the 25th Party Congress announced for next February, firming up of some policy lines and serious discussion of certain issues might have been expected. It should be noted, however, that these were elections to the republic Supreme Soviets rather than to the USSR Supreme Soviet, as was the case last year when substantive issues were attacked more directly. The speeches for the republic elections in 1971 were generally less revealing than those for the USSR elections in 1970.

Probably more important, this year's election campaign followed a period during which Brezhnev experienced some policy difficulties, was hospitalized, and then kept to a restricted work schedule. Thus the speeches may reflect policy indecision and inattention at the top. The leaders apparently are keeping options open until some "trends" are established. As the congress approaches, discussion of policy questions may become more vigorous and break into the open. Meanwhile the abrupt departure from the Kremlin in mid-April of maverick Aleksandr Shelepin may have

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

encouraged his former colleagues to keep a low profile.

Brezhnev's Stature

The protocol surrounding the election campaign and references to Brezhnev in the speeches indicate that the General Secretary remains pre-eminent within the leadership. Some leaders were less florid in their praise for him than last year, but this change may be attributed to the low-keyed tone of the speeches rather than to a decrease of support.

The order of the speeches and the number of nominations each leader received suggest a relative increase in prestige for Party Secretary Kirilenko, who increasingly has acted as Brezhnev's deputy, at the expense of Secretary Suslov. Kirilenko collected more nominations and also spoke later in the campaign than did Suslov. (Late is better in these matters.) These increased honors are obviously a mark in Kirilenko's favor, but they also redound to Brezhnev's credit. Kirilenko is a close ally of the General Secretary, while Suslov seems to be one of Brezhnev's more independent colleagues.

It was noteworthy that another Brezhnev ally, Ukrainian party boss Shcherbitsky, called attention to his association with the General Secretary by revealing that Brezhnev had telephoned him two days before his speech to ask about Ukrainian affairs. The remark also suggests that Brezhnev was making an effort to raise his own profile following a period of relative inactivity occasioned by illness.

Foreign Policy

Since last year, most of Brezhnev's public appearances have been related to foreign affairs.

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

The Central Committee plenum in April concentrated on foreign relations and restated its approval of Brezhnev's conduct of the policy of detente. In their speeches, Brezhnev's colleagues followed the same pattern. They presented a united front on foreign policy matters, particularly in voicing their support for detente. Although variations in tone and emphasis appeared in the leaders' treatment of external "threats" to Soviet security, these differences were submerged beneath a general mood of satisfaction with the USSR's international position.

Brezhnev's own speech was almost devoid of specifics with regard to foreign policy. He concentrated on detente in general and Soviet-American relations in particular. He praised President Ford and the US, but hinted darkly about opponents of detente whose strength has come under growing attention from Moscow in recent months. Unlike the other major speeches that dealt with foreign policy, Brezhnev's address omitted all reference to the Middle East, China, or Vietnam.

Podgorny's speech was more revealing. The Soviet President delivered his most unqualified endorsement of detente to date. In contrast to his 1974 election speech in which he had emphasized the precarious quality of detente, this year Podgorny maintained that attempts to derail increasing East-West cooperation were doomed to failure. He characterized "imperialist reaction" not as an ominous threat to international stability, but as a declining force increasingly bound by new trends in foreign relations.

In keeping with the more sanguine tone of the speech, Podgorny's reference to China was much less alarming than last year's. In 1974 he warned his audience of the Chinese nuclear threat; this year

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

he confined his remarks to a slap on the wrist of Maoist "instigators of international tension."

Prime Minister Kosygin stressed the domestic benefits of detente. In his most explicit formulation to date of the tie between reduced tension and economic gains, he noted that international cooperation led to improved economic planning and consequent benefits for the consumer. He also stressed the increase in funds for social projects that would result from a reduction of arms expenditures.

Kosygin, like Brezhnev, criticized Western politicians who are still tied to cold war concepts. He neither portrayed such figures as insurmountable obstacles to detente, nor--as Podgorny had done--as confounded by detente's successes. The Soviet Premier nevertheless asserted that detente had become the "determining characteristic" in international affairs.

As in his 1974 speech, Kosygin had kind words for the Chinese people and no direct criticism of their leaders. He alone of the Soviet leaders alluded to the Cambodian victory. Both references suggest Kosygin's concern with proper state-to-state relations and his relative detachment from ideological conflicts.

The other leaders also endorsed the concept of detente, although their speeches revealed different perceptions of the benefits to be derived from and the obstacles in the way of increased cooperation with the West. Kirilenko and Gromyko concentrated on the domestic advantages of Soviet foreign policy, arguing that a continued relaxation of tensions would create a healthy environment for communist construction at home. Suslov, Ponomarev, and Mazurov paid more attention to the external advantages of detente, each citing Portugal as an example of a victory for socialism in the age of peaceful coexistence.

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

Each leader saw detente as threatened by hostile "forces" in the West, although evaluations of the strength of such forces varied. The speeches seemed to distinguish these hostile forces from the "leaders of the bourgeois world" who, Brezhnev declared, could no longer realistically expect to solve their disputes with the Soviet Union by force of arms.

Kirilenko acknowledged the activities of "very influential circles" which were attempting to sabotage detente, but expressed confidence that wiser heads would prevail. Andropov, Grechko, and Gromyko acknowledged the threat but did not express any sense of urgency. By way of contrast, Suslov spoke of new anti-Soviet campaigns to "poison the international atmosphere." Ponomarev depicted efforts to build detente as a constant struggle in the face of persistent struggle with the "forces of reaction." Mazurov and Shcherbitsky warned of efforts to stir up the arms race. Mazurov also reminded his audience of the history of antagonism that preceded detente by identifying "US aggression" as the vanquished force in Vietnam; no other leader mentioned the US in the context of Hanoi's successes.

Andropov Stresses Vigilance

KGB chief Yury Andropov was the logical selection among the 25 top Soviet leaders to present a tough, uncompromising approach to the need for ideological vigilance in an era of detente. Andropov praised at length the democratic virtues of the Soviet system, while charging that certain admitted "shortcomings" are being blown up by the USSR's ideological enemies into a general indictment of the whole. In an unusually direct message to political dissidents, Andropov warned that by making common cause with Moscow's ideological foes they are excluding themselves from the benefits of Soviet democracy.

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL

The speech, like Andropov's past public statements, takes a tough line befitting an internal security chief who has been called upon to give a public review of the guidelines for his area of policy responsibility. Within leadership councils, however, Andropov appears to be a relatively sophisticated and often a moderate voice. Under his direction, the KGB has been used effectively but with discrimination in the pursuit of balanced domestic and foreign policies.

Andropov's tough public approach may also mark the ideological campaign, which normally coincides with the end of each academic year. The campaign to reinvigorate the ideological elan of party workers and society in general may be more important than ever this year as the regime seeks to balance the obligatory detente-oriented themes that will dominate the headlines growing out of a CSCE summit.

Andropov's statements complement the current crackdown on political dissent and cultural non-conformity, but it is unlikely that the speech signals a resolution by the leadership of the general drift in ideological/cultural policies that has been evident since the turn of the year. A firm decision probably will not occur until key vacancies in the party apparatus concerned with these sectors are filled, something that may not happen until close to, or at, the party congress next February.

The comments of other leaders on ideological and cultural matters were limited, bland, or nonexistent. Petr Demichev, candidate Politburo member, culture minister, and former party secretary in charge of culture and propaganda, was silent on these issues, save for a doctrinaire endorsement of socialist realism.

July 17, 1975

-7-

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

The three top leaders left the issues surrounding cultural and other contacts with the West virtually unmentioned. President Podgorny touched on the subject, as did a handful of other leaders, by calling cultural cooperation a vital element of detente, but only on well-known Soviet terms that ban "interference in domestic affairs."

First Deputy Premier Mazurov was the only leader besides Andropov to come even close to dealing with the troublesome ideological side of Soviet detente policy. Warning against ideological penetrations of bourgeois notions of democracy, Mazurov pledged to defend and improve the "already superior" Soviet system.

Mazurov, Andropov, and to a lesser degree, senior ideologist Suslov focused on ideological and cultural issues during last year's election campaign. This time, the virtual omission of these topics by Suslov is striking, and may reflect the continuing, unsettled state of affairs and possible differences of approach within the leadership in this policy area.

Economic Management

Earlier this year, signs appeared of a high-level push to expand the reorganization of industry. The election speeches, however, do not suggest much movement on the question. Brezhnev, in fact, maintained an almost complete silence on the subject of improving economic management. He merely noted that three Central Committee plenums had already discussed such problems as raising productivity and increasing efficiency.

A peculiarity of this regime has been the absence, since September 1965, of plenums dealing in a thorough manner with industry and economic management. Occasionally, leaders have suggested holding

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

such plenums, but have made no headway. In recent years, the routine fall plenums that approve the annual plan and budget and hear a speech by Brezhnev have been portrayed as contributing significantly to economic policy. Brezhnev was probably referring to these when he spoke about economic plenums. It was at the plenum in December 1973 that Brezhnev voiced the need for "an entire system of measures" to improve management and planning, an appeal that has yet to bear fruit or even to be repeated by Brezhnev or other leaders.

The subject of improving economic management was broached by only 8 of the 25 leaders: Kosygin, Podgorny, Kirilenko, Mazurov, Romanov, Masherov, Demichev, and Dolgikh. Comments by the last two were brief and general. Dolgikh noted that the party is "implementing a whole complex of measures aimed at making the management machinery" operate better. According to Demichev, the "Central Committee and the Soviet government are adopting purposeful measures to raise the efficiency of the management system, to eliminate superfluous elements in it." In their lengthier comments, the other leaders discussed the program to institute two- and three-tier management within ministries and create production associations; the desirability of taking a comprehensive, integrated, multi-sector approach to economic problems; and the use of more advanced mechanisms of economic management.

Kosygin reminded his audience that "we still lag behind the US in labor productivity and behind the most developed capitalist countries of Europe in certain industrial fields." His discussion of measures to improve the Soviet system, however, was brief and uninspired. In describing the current industrial reorganization, he gave credit to the party for giving "prominence in due time in the work of all national economic organs to questions" of raising production efficiency and improving planning and eval-

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL.

CONFIDENTIAL.

uating enterprise performance, Kosygin called for new indicators that would encourage the introduction of new products. He implied, however, that devising these indicators, as well as putting them into effect, would occur only during the next five year plan. Kosygin avoided commenting on the need to approach problems in a comprehensive way by cutting across sectoral boundaries--a subject that was taken up by others.

Kirilenko and Mazurov spoke about management at greater length and with more force. In part, they tailored their addresses to their audiences in Leningrad, which has been a moving force behind several current initiatives to improve management. Both praised Leningrad's performance in creating production and scientific-production associations. Kirilenko also admitted the existence of opposition to the industrial reorganization, saying that "unfortunately, not everyone is aware of and understands" the advantages of associations, "even in your city." While cautioning against "haste and artificiality," he said, "it is also essential persistently to overcome the inertia of established forms and the fear of everything new."

Both Kirilenko and Mazurov mentioned the Central Committee's recent approval of a cooperative agreement among 28 economic organizations in Leningrad to help speed up the construction of a hydroelectric station in Siberia. They praised this agreement as embodying an integrated approach ensuring the cooperation of organizations under different ministries and in different regions.

Besides endorsing production concentration and specialization and the integrated approach, Mazurov urged "making skillful use of economic levers" and "applying mathematical-economic methods in management." He said it is necessary "to strive persistently to overcome a narrow departmental approach" in economic matters. In this connection, he approvingly cited "the unified, integrated plan for

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

economic and social development" being drawn up for Leningrad city and oblast. Kirilenko also commanded Leningrad's initiative in formulating integrated plans for economic and social development at the enterprise level--mentioning the sales pitch he got on this scheme while visiting a local plant. Leningrad party boss Romanov's comments on local practice were low-keyed; he merely listed the efforts at concentration and specialization, creating associations, and modernizing enterprises.

Podgorny listed long-term planning, the two- and three-tier management system, and production associations as elements in the effort to improve planning and management. He claimed that an "overall approach" to solving national economic problems is being adopted more widely, "making it possible to combine organically economic and social problems, eliminate departmental barriers, and expand substantially branch and territorial ties."

As usual, Podgorny, head of the soviet apparatus, advocated expanding the role of the soviets. This year he focused on the soviets as institutions that "unite all threads of state control and therefore have the greatest opportunities for precisely ensuring an integrated approach to resolving the problems that arise." He said that "many local soviets have amassed considerable experience in the integrated planning of economic development on their territory." Noting that the activity of production associations often extends beyond regional boundaries, Podgorny declared that "success depends to a large extent upon smooth interaction between the soviets and economic organizations." This integrating role is one usually ascribed to the party; Shcherbitsky, for example, has previously said that local party organizations are the only institutions that can combine and synthesize all interests.

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

A rather different treatment of economic affairs was presented by Masharov, who stressed indicators of quality, technological innovation, and morality. He began by censuring the still prevalent use of quantitative indicators in planning and management that distort the work of economic organizations and play havoc with quality. Demanding that quality become the determining criterion, he charged that "the absence in plans of precise demands for quality of output and its technical-economic level" is one of the main reasons "a decisive swing toward science in production" has not been made. Continuing this causal chain, Masharov said that because enterprises "do not set science new tasks and do not demand technical solutions," scientific and technical personnel do not work productively. Masharov could not get through economics without mentioning ideological considerations. Talking about the need for taking a comprehensive approach to problems, Masharov let his listeners know that he means "comprehensive in the broadest sense of the word, including organizational-technical, social, moral, and psychological aspects."

Allocations

In his election speech last year, Brezhnev referred to work in progress on both the five-year (1976-80) and long-term (1976-90) plans. He also affirmed his and the rest of the leadership's commitment to improving living standards, saying that this policy aim would be embodied in the long-term plan. Both these subjects were absent from his speech this year and were either absent or obscured in the speeches of other leaders.

Formulation of the long-term plan may be lagging simply because of the enormous methodological and procedural tasks involved; it could also be related to continuing discussions over economic priorities. Political considerations would seem to argue for a plan oriented toward improving consumer welfare in the long run. Brezhnev's report to the 24th Party Congress in 1971 declared that the main task of this five year plan was to improve living standards. In December it became

July 17, 1975

-12-

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

clear that the goal of this plan--to have output from group B industries (mainly consumer goods) grow faster than from group A industries (mainly producer goods)--would not be met. Since late last year, public commitment to the consumer program has, not surprisingly, waned.

Characteristically, Brezhnev has, for the time being, adopted a neutral stance and side-stepped the issue. Many of the other leaders have done the same. A handful came close to addressing the problem, but their formulations were often indirect, ambiguous, and even contradictory. Thus, while the question of heavy industry versus consumer welfare seems to be unresolved and under debate, the muted public discussion does not point, at present, to a sharp battle between rigidly aligned factions.

The leaders were especially circumspect in dealing with the question of the long-term plan. Kazakh First Secretary Kunayev, a protege of Brezhnev, was the only leader to mention the subject, and he merely quoted from Brezhnev's 1974 election speech. The Kazakh press published the passage, but *Pravda* dropped it. References to the "main task" of the present five year plan were more common. Ten leaders--but not the top three--cited the need to improve living standards. Many of those who raised the point are thought to have a bias toward heavy industry, however, and almost all simply declared that the job is being done.

Kosygin and Podgorny spoke directly to the question of why more could not be done for the consumer and thereby implied some debate on the question. Kosygin said that "the question is often asked: Why can we not accelerate fulfillment of our plans, further increase the rate of growth of the standard of living...?" Podgorny speculated, "Some people may reason as follows: Insofar as

July 17, 1975

-13-

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

the government is our own, the people's government, what difference would it make if it fixes higher wages and salaries and lower prices for goods?" Both answered, in essence, that society cannot consume more than it produces. Podgorny also cautioned that living standards cannot be raised "through arbitrary decisions."

Kirilenko generally followed the outline of his article in *Kommunist*, No. 4, March 1975 (*Staff Notes*, May 9). He claimed the main task of the five year plan is being consistently implemented and that the 800 light industry and food industry enterprises built during this five year plan "will make it possible noticeably to increase the production of consumer goods." He did not repeat his statement in *Kommunist* that prosperity will help advance the Soviet peace program and will make socialism's superiority more obvious to workers in capitalist countries. He did make a rather defensive aside in comparing Leningrad's present housing with that available before the war.

Kirilenko dwelt mostly on heavy industry. He described the Kama Truck Plant, mentioning that he had visited it more than once and had directly observed its development. (Tatar Oblast secretary Troitsky has noted in *Novy Mir* No. 1, January 1975, that Kirilenko visits the site "yearly.") While waxing enthusiastic over such large new projects, Kirilenko observed that an increasing share of capital investment funds should be allocated for reconstruction of existing enterprises, rather than for new starts in construction. Finally, Kirilenko stated that "the Central Committee considers it necessary for machine building to develop at higher rates."

Kosygin also singled out machine building in discussing "the inadequate use of production funds in a number of branches." He called on machine

July 17, 1975

-14-

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

building plants to operate on double shifts, which would "increase national income without additional expenditure for capital construction." This, in turn, "would present an opportunity to speed up implementation of a number of measures for further improving the socio-cultural standards of living for our people." Here, Kosygin gave a more positive response to the question he posed early in his speech about doing more for consumers. In other indirect ways, Kosygin voiced support for the consumer program. He noted that putting international relations on the basis of peaceful co-existence "enables us to evolve our national economic plans with greater confidence" and "means that it is now possible to implement much more efficiently the course of the party aimed at raising the people's prosperity." This, of course, was one of the basic premises for the consumer program as presented in Brezhnev's report to the 24th Party Congress.

Another premise was that the development of the Soviet economy now permits, as it did not in the past, increased attention to consumer welfare. Among the leaders, only Kosygin's deputy Mazurov came close to repeating this rationale. He stated that, at the present stage of developed socialism, it is possible "to combine successfully the intensive development of heavy industry and the strengthening of the country's defensive might with a considerable rise in the people's prosperity." By using the word "intensive," Mazurov seemed to imply that heavy industry should grow on the basis of increased efficiency and productivity, not on large increases in capital and labor. Mazurov also repeated a third premise for the consumer program--that the efficient provision of consumer goods and services "is of considerable importance for highly productive activity" by labor. Speaking to a Leningrad audience, Mazurov, like Kirilenko, touched on the need for reconstruction, but "at machine

July 17, 1975

-15-

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

building enterprises, and particularly at light industry enterprises." His listeners were also assured that "the party Central Committee and the Soviet government keep a strict eye on maintaining the stability of retail prices." (Romanov, Leningrad Oblast first secretary, also mentioned price stability, perhaps a matter of popular concern in the region.)

While voicing support for the consumer program, Mazurov at one point seemed also to address its critics. He observed that bourgeois propaganda cites the main task of the five year plan to prove that the Soviet Union is developing a "consumer society." In fact, some Soviet leaders have warned of the danger of fostering "consumerism." Mazurov's disclaimers may be directed as much at carping at home as at propaganda from abroad.

The leaders did not make an issue of allocations among other economic sectors or among regions. The need for strengthening defense was frequently treated, but in a non-polemical manner. Many approvingly recited the major economic projects under way--mostly in the Russian Republic, including Siberia. Andropov noted that the Soviet Union had long ago wanted to gain access to the energy resources and raw materials of Siberia and the Far East, but plans had been hindered by the war and lack of opportunity. Now the economy's level of development permitted such an endeavor. Dolgikh, who hails from Siberia, expressed satisfaction that the comprehensive development of "the most important regions" is being successfully solved.

Many leaders mentioned the program to develop the non-black soil region of the RSFSR. Adoption of the program last year indicated that agriculture was getting a head start in capturing its share in the next five year plan. Kulakov promised

July 17, 1975

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL.

that "our state will continue to invest considerable funds in agriculture." Polyansky said that capital investment in agriculture has been increasing every year. He remarked, however, that current progress does not meet increased requirements and that farms need increasing amounts of equipment. Kosygin invoked the world food problem in expressing approval of the party's agricultural program. Suslov's complaint about not enough meat in the stores also indicates support for the program.

25X1

July 17, 1975

-17-

CONFIDENTIAL